

AIRWORTHINESS ALERT

01/2006

Safety Harness Attachment

Background

The investigation into a recent fatal gyroplane accident revealed that the lap portion of the pilots safety harness was attached to a section of angle aluminium which in turn was attached to a piece of flat aluminium approximately 300 mm long by 50 mm wide by 3 mm thick. This was fitted on top of the seat-mounting frame and was held in position by the bolts that secured the seat tank to the mounting frame. The accident resulted in the seat tank with the pilot attached being ejected from the wreckage. The opinion of the investigators was that had the lap belt been attached to the airframe in a normal manner, the pilot may have survived.

Recommendation

It is **strongly recommended** that pilots and owners inspect the safety harness attachment method and ascertain that the attachment points of the harness are securely mounted to the mast, the keel or lower cluster plates of the gyroplane, or to brackets or mountings directly attached to mast, keel or lower cluster plates, and capable of withstanding a force of :-

Upwards....4.5 G

Forwards....9 G

Sideways....3 G

Downwards.4.5 G

Where there is doubt as to the integrity of the attachment method, the gyroplane should be grounded until an ASRA Technical Adviser (TA) has been consulted. Where the gyroplane is located in an area where access to a TA is not readily available, the ASRA Technical Manager or ASRA Operations Manager should be consulted before further operations.

Allan Wardill
Operations Manager